

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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SUBJECT: REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN DEMOCRATIC
KAMPUCHEA

REF: (A) STATE 157953 (B) BANGKOK 17849 (C) BANGKOK 18288

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING IS AN INTERVIEW OF CAMBODIAN REFUGEE
SOURCE W. INTERVIEW WAS CONDUCTED AT SIKHIER, THAILAND IN
MARCH, 1978.

2. SOURCE W ARRIVED IN THAILAND NOVEMBER 10, 1977, FROM ODDAR
MEANCHEY PROVINCE, CAMBODIA. HE JOINED THE KHMER ROUGE IN
SIEM REAP IN 1971 AS A SIMPLE FOOT SOLDIER. SUBSEQUENTLY, HE
WORKED IN THE MARKET PLACE, CLEANING UP, UNTIL FEBRUARY 1975,
WHEN HE WAS ORDERED TO MOVE TO ODDAR MEANCHEY. SUDDENLY, IN
SEPTEMBER, 1976, HE WAS TOLD THAT HE WAS APPOINTED VILLAGE
CHIEF. HIS ACCOUNT FOLLOWS:

3. VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION QTE ANGKA CHOOSES THE MOST
IGNORANT ONES FOR RESPONSIBLE JOBS. I WAS CHOSEN TO BE A
VILLAGE CHIEF. I WAS GIVEN TEN DAYS OF TRAINING DURING WHICH
I WAS TAUGHT TO FILL OUT FORMS. I WAS LECTURED ON THE
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DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR AND ON THE NECESSITY
FOR EQUALITY.

4. INCLUDING CHILDREN, 445 PEOPLE LIVED IN MY VILLAGE.
FOR CONTROL, THE PEOPLE WERE DIVIDED INTO GROUPS OF TEN
PERSONS. THE 12 TO 25 YEAR OLDS (ABOUT 25 PERSONS) WERE
FORMED INTO A SPECIAL GROUP OF TROUBLESHOOTERS, USUALLY IN WORK

PROJECTS. THEY ALSO SPIED FOR ANGKA. THE 25 TO 50 YEAR OLDS WORKED ON IRRIGATION PROJECTS AND FIELD WORK. THOSE OVER 50 WERE GIVEN LIGHTER WORK, SUCH AS MAKING BASKETS.

5. WHEN THE KHMER ROUGE TOOK OVER MY VILLAGE IN APRIL, 1975, THEY ORGANIZED THE PEOPLE AND BEGAN TO TRY TO IDENTIFY ALL THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH THE FORMER REGIME, INCLUDING GOVERNMENT WORKERS, SOLDIERS, STUDENTS AND ANYONE WITH EDUCATION. I ESTIMATE THAT 50 TO 60 SUCH PERSONS, OF THE 445, WERE IDENTIFIED AND "SENT TO ANGKA LEU," TO BE ELIMINATED.

6. IN THE EARLY DAYS, WE LED THE PEOPLE TO BELIEVE THAT WHATEVER THEY PRODUCED THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO KEEP. IN FACT, HOWEVER, THEY SOON LEARNED THAT EVERYTHING HAD TO BE GIVEN TO ANGKA--RICE, CHICKENS, DUCKS, AND PIGS. THEY SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME BUILDING ROADS AND DIGGING IRRIGATION DITCHES, ALL FOR ANGKA. WHEN THE PEOPLE ASKED FOR MORE FOOD, WE TOLD THEM THAT WHEN "ONE EATS, ALL EAT." THE PEOPLE QUICKLY FOUND THAT ALL ATE VERY LITTLE.

7. AS VILLAGE CHIEF, I HELD INDOCTRINATION SESSIONS EVERY TEN DAYS FOR THE PEOPLE. PRIOR TO THE MEETINGS, I WALKED TO THE ANGKA OFFICE, A FEW KILOMETERS AWAY, AND RECEIVED A MESSAGE TELLING ME WHAT I SHOULD TELL THE PEOPLE AT THE SESSIONS. THERE WERE ONLY THREE MESSAGES:

(A) LOVE THE COUNTRY; (B) BE HONEST TO THE COUNTRY; AND (C) DON'T BE LAZY, WORK HARDER, BE IN FRONT NOT THE BACK.

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8. THERE WERE FIVE OTHER KHMER ROUGE CADRES IN MY VILLAGE. ONE OR TWO WERE "ANGKA." WE HAD NO WEAPONS. WHEN THE VILLAGERS WENT TO WORK, WE WENT WITH THEM TO KEEP AN EYE ON THEM. THE FIVE WERE THE MOST STUPID AROUND. BUT THE PEOPLE DID NOT SEEM TO HATE US, DESPITE THEIR HATRED FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

9. THE PEOPLE BECAME UNHAPPY VERY QUICKLY. AS FOOD RATIONS DIPPED, ONE TIN A DAY, PEOPLE WERE "SENT TO ANGKA LEU" AND THE PEOPLE WERE FORCED TO WORK HARDER AND HARDER, THE PEOPLE INCREASINGLY DISLIKED THE NEW REGIME IN PHNOM PENH. BY 1976, THE HATRED WAS UNIVERSAL IN ODDAR MEANCHEY. LIKE THE VILLAGERS, WE ALSO FELT BETRAYED BY ANGKA. I HAD BELIEVED IN COMMUNISM AND FOUGHT HARD FOR THE REVOLUTION FOR MANY YEARS SO THAT CAMBODIANS WOULD GET THEIR FREEDOM, AND BE ALLOWED TO EAT THE RICE THEY RAISED. THE PEOPLE WORKED HARD, BUT THE RESULTS WERE QUITE DIFFERENT. I HEARD THAT THE PEOPLE WERE BEING DEPRIVED OF RICE. THE RICE WAS BEING SENT TO HANOI AND HO CHI MINH CITY. THE PEOPLE FELT TRICKED. EVERYTHING WAS TAKEN FROM THEM. NEVERTHELESS, THE PEOPLE WERE AFRAID TO REVOLT OR TO TRY TO

ESCAPE. THEY WERE AFRAID TO TRY TO ESCAPE SINCE THERE WERE BOOBY TRAPS AND BOMBS EVERYWHERE IN THE FORESTS. CITIZENS WHO WERE INTERESTED IN POLITICS WERE KILLED.

10. NEVERTHELESS, THERE WERE REPORTS OF REVOLTS FREQUENTLY IN 1975, 1976, AND 1977. I WAS AWARE OF ONE REVOLT PLOT WHICH INCLUDED THE KHMER ROUGE LEADERS OF FOUR PROVINCES--ODDAR MEANCHHEY, SIEM REAP, PRECH VIHAR, AND BATTAMBANG. THE PLOT WAS MADE IN MID-1976 WHEN EVERYONE DISCOVERED HOW THEY HAD BEEN MISLED BY ANGKA. THE PLOTTERS PLANNED TO MARCH ON PHNOM PENH ON JANUARY 20, 1977, TO THROW OUT THE ANGKA. EVEN THE FIVE ANGKA MEMBERS IN MY VILLAGE PLANNED TO JOIN THE REVOLT. I TALKED WITH THE OTHER CADRE ABOUT THE REVOLT, AND LEARNING OF THEIR SUPPORT
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I EVEN TOLD THE FIVE CADRES THAT I HATED KHIEU SAMPHAN AND IENG SARY. I HAD NEVER HEARD OF POL POT UNTIL JANUARY, 1977. THE SIEM REAP PROVINCE CHIEF BELIEVED THAT HIS 3,000 MEN, IN THREE BATTALIONS, WOULD FOLLOW HIM AGAINST ANGKA IN PHNOM PENH.

11. THE PURPOSE OF THE REVOLT WAS TO THROW OUT THE LEADERS IN PHNOM PENH AND TO FREE THE PEOPLE. WE WANTED FREEDOM AND LIBERTY FOR THE PEOPLE.

12. A MESSENGER FOR THE PLOTTERS, ENROUTE FROM SIEM REAP TO PREAR VIHAR, WAS CAPTURED ON JANUARY 17, 1977, THREE DAYS BEFORE THE REVOLT. THE MESSENGER WAS TORTURED, INCLUDING SHOCKS FROM AN ELECTRO-GENERATOR ATTACHED TO HIS PENIS. HE CONFESSED AND A PURGE BEGAN. SENIOR LEADERS, INCLUDING THE SIEM REAP PROVINCE CHIEF, WERE ARRESTED BY THEIR DEPUTIES. AFTER THEIR ELIMINATION, THE DEPUTIES WERE ARRESTED BY THEIR DEPUTIES AND SO DOWN THE LINE. I LEARNED IN EARLY MAY THAT THE PURGE WAS NEARING MY ECHELON, AND I DECIDED TO FLEE TO THAILAND. END QTE.
O'DONOHUE

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